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1) WARREN, D.

2) WAITHMAN, R.







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CHRIST'S HOSPITAL  
AND THE  
PARISH OF EDMONTON.

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A  
LETTER  
TO  
WILLIAM MELLISH, Esq. M.P.  
ON A  
LATE DISPUTE  
IN THE  
*PARISH OF EDMONTON;*  
AND ON THE  
ALLEGED ABUSES  
IN  
*Christ's Hospital.*

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BY THE  
REVEREND DAWSON WARREN, A. M.  
VICAR OF EDMONTON.

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1808.

CHRIST'S HOSPITAL  
AND THE  
PARISH OF EDMONTON.

LETTER

TO  
WILLIAM WELLS, M.D.

LATE DEPUTY

PARISH OF EDMONTON.

ALFRED WELLS

Christ's Hospital





# LETTER

TO

## WILLIAM MELLISH, Esq. M.P.

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MY DEAR SIR,

AS I now publicly address you, without your consent or even knowledge, I ought to begin with an apology for the liberty I am taking. I have received from your hands a most valuable favour, the presentation of my son to Christ's Hospital. Your kindness to my family in this instance, has been most scandalously misrepresented, and every exertion has been made that malice and falsehood could suggest, in order to draw a public odium on us both. We have also been violently charged with misconduct in a parochial affair comparatively of very trifling importance, and which would never have been thought of beyond the bounds of Edmonton, but for the restless ill-nature of an individual, who has made it a vehicle of political animosity against you, and of an enmity which I can hardly account for against myself.

I well know, Sir, how high your character stands

in the estimation of the virtuous and enlightened, and that some persons may consider my attempt to justify it in these instances as an improper and unnecessary intrusion. I also recollect, that when Mr. Waithman thought proper to abuse us in the daily papers, and in the Common Council, about a year since, I waited upon you, and asked your permission to publish a reply to him. Your answer was, "Do pray let him alone; if I feel perfectly indifferent to what he says, surely you need not regard it:" and you added this advice, "never answer or notice anonymous attacks." In obedience to you I was silent—That silence has encouraged Mr. Waithman to proceed to much greater and more unwarrantable lengths. By him or his associates we have been traduced in that respectable assembly, the Common Council of the city of London, and vilified in the public newspapers. They have circulated handbills round my parish, some anonymous, and some with various signatures: they have insulted me with the most scurrilous anonymous letters, and even addressed such productions to my wife, for the base purpose, I presume, of endeavouring to embitter my domestic comfort. Through some or all of these various channels you are represented as meanly trafficking with the privileges attached to your situation, for the purpose of securing votes in the county of Middlesex; and I am held out to the world as disgracing my character both as a man



and as a clergyman. You, Sir, are known to the world; secure in the established reputation, the honours, and the opulence which surround you, you feel invulnerable to the attacks of these men, and laugh at their folly in throwing away, at this time and in so useless a manner, their electioneering ammunition. With me the case is different; although placed in a situation of much comfort and respectability, my name was unknown to the world, till the annexing it to yours, and the abuse which has been heaped upon it, have given it a sort of notoriety. If, when rendered thus conspicuous, the imputations cast upon me are not contradicted,—if I silently acquiesce in things which I know to be false,—I shall live under the misery of a disgraced character: the esteem of my friends, the respect of my parishioners, will be diminished; the duties of my sacred function must be performed with less effect; and the services I might be able to render to society must be materially lessened. For these, and other considerations, I feel myself called upon to submit to the public a vindication of my own conduct, which I reflect upon without a blush; and of yours, which I consider with the highest respect and gratitude.

At the two last Vestries which were held in Edmonton, and which have been brought to the notice of the public by letters and advertisements in the Newspapers, I did not offer myself to the attention

of the inhabitants assembled, because I meditated a still more public appeal to the candour and judgment not only of my parishioners, but also of all who have heard, and been at all biassed by Mr. Waithman's accusations. I know that silence and reply to such an accuser are both replete with danger and inconvenience. Silence, though it may really proceed from contempt, will sometimes be construed into an admission that he speaks truth. Reply, on the other hand, opens the door to fresh abuse. In an affair of this kind, Mr. Waithman has some advantages over me: he has the free use of means to which it would be beneath me to resort. You must remember, Sir, that, at the Vestry of October 3, he advanced a public charge against me of canvassing the parish, and of using undue influence to procure votes in favour of the officers, which charge I publicly and strongly denied: he could not support it: he had not the manliness to retract it, or say a word in explanation; and yet had the meanness to insinuate the same charge in the public newspapers, under the signature of A. B.

At that same Vestry, Mr. Waithman made an allusion to a discussion, which took place near ten years ago in Edmonton, about my right, as Vicar of the parish, to preside at all the parochial meetings. He made a similar allusion in the Common Council; and on both occasions accompanied them by an assertion which, if true, would



have mortified me extremely: he stated, that he had been of service in reconciling me to my parishioners, with whom I was at variance. I am tied to my parish by a bond which will most likely only be dissolved by my death: I am also attached to it by the strongest bonds of gratitude and affection: my heart records and acknowledges ten thousand instances of kindness and respect which I have received, and am daily receiving, from its inhabitants of every denomination: I am therefore deeply hurt that my parishioners and myself should be handed round the country as having quarrelled with each other, and as having been reconciled by Mr. Waithman. How he could reconcile a difference where no difference existed, how he could join what never was separated, I cannot imagine. It is with pride and pleasure that I now publicly boast, that I never was at variance with my parishioners. That contest, the recollection of which he introduced, I think very indelicately, and for the sinister purpose of exciting and enlisting in his cause some unworthy passions of the human mind, was not with the parish, but with a respectable individual, and even with him I never quarrelled. From my first entering the parish to the present moment, even through the whole of that unpleasant business, the individual I refer to never spoke an unkind word, or did an unkind thing by me: he did not publish anonymous attacks upon my character; he did not invent falsehoods to defame me; nor



did he attribute to me sentiments I never expressed, and motives which never entered into my mind; we exchanged the right hand of friendly intercourse whenever we met, and I have received from him repeated marks of regard and attention. Though for a short time I differed with him, I never was at variance with the parish. When the last Vestry which met on that subject determined, by a majority of 72 to 50, to resist the claim, I immediately relinquished my personal prosecution of it, because I did not chuse to contest such a point with my parishioners. I had struggled for it, only that I might be serviceable to them: and as they declined those services, I retired. I must relate the conclusion of that affair:—An hour after I had left the Vestry, two Gentlemen, deputed by those who had just defeated me, called upon me, and, in words which even now vibrate upon my feelings, told me, that they were charged to express, in the name of the Vestry, the highest sentiments of respect and esteem; that they entreated me to come again among them, as if nothing had ever happened, for that they should always rejoice to see me; and that they had unanimously resolved to defray every expense that the question had occasioned. They then delivered to me an invitation to dine with them, on any day I would appoint. I accepted the invitation, and was entertained by a large party of the inhabitants in a manner too gratifying to my feelings for me ever to forget.

Was this being at variance with my parishioners? This the difference which Mr. Waithman talks of having reconciled? Indeed, Sir, when he presumed to state to the world, that I had been at variance with my parishioners, he uttered a libel upon me, and an insult upon them.

Before I enter on the subject, which is the principal object of my present address, I wish to rectify some of the mistatements which appear in a production of Mr. Waithman's, inserted in the *TIMES* and other newspapers, with the signature of A. B. for that contains the substance of the various papers and handbills, which have been circulated to lower both yourself and me in the estimation of the country, and to excite popular discontent against us. As most of my readers will not have the paper by them, I reprint it, with references to those passages, to which I am desirous of directing their attention.

### “PARISH DISPUTE.

“*To the Editor of The Times.*

“SIR,

“A contest of a very singular nature has lately taken place at Edmonton, which cannot but be interesting to every parish in the kingdom. The Parish-officers had submitted a proposition to a Vestry for building a wall round the workhouse, which was negatived (A). They then determined

of themselves, not only to build the wall, but also *two cells* (B). Previously to their contracting for the work, a requisition, signed by 28 parishioners, was presented to the Rev. Dawson Warren, Vicar, who refused to call a Vestry (C), stating that he agreed with the Churchwardens, and they were about explaining the business in a printed paper, which would be sent round the Parish (D). Another paper, signed by the Vicar himself, was also distributed, wherein a Vestry was principally objected to, as not conveying the sense of the Parish, its proceedings being mostly under the controul of a few turbulent individuals; and that the cells were for the confinement of the insane or refractory, which, in the Vicar's words, "*would supersede the necessity of appeal to the Magistrates*" (E). It is not necessary to notice all the paper contentions with which the Parish has been inundated. After repeated ineffectual applications for a Vestry, a General Meeting of the Parishioners was called, and held at the Rose and Crown, Edmonton, on the 7th ult. when the following, among various other Resolutions, moved by Mr. Waithman, were agreed to:—

Resolved, that the Churchwardens and Overseers are not empowered to make any new buildings or erections, at the parish expense, without the consent of the parishioners in General Vestry.

Resolved, That it was proposed by them, at a General Vestry, to build a brick wall around the Workhouse, which proposition was rejected; that it appears they have since deter-



mined to carry the same into effect, in opposition to the declared sense of the Vestry, *and also to build two cells.*

Resolved, That a Poor-house is intended as an asylum for "distressed men, poor widows, and fatherless children!!!" not as a place of confinement for the disorderly, refractory, or insane: that the erection of the said walls and cells would therefore be a wanton and useless expense—a hedge, ditch, and guard-fence, being sufficient for every necessary purpose.

Resolved, That by a printed paper this day circulated, and signed by the Rev. Mr. Dawson Warren, he appears to have assumed the character of *Overseer* as well as Vicar, his object being, as he states, "to explain what is doing at the poor-house;" that, in the said paper, it is fully avowed, *that the cells are for the confinement of lunatics, and the turbulent and disorderly*, thereby confirming the apprehensions of the Parishioners, as to the design of *converting the Workhouse into a Prison or Madhouse, or both.*

Resolved, That such interference, and also the applying the epithets of *silly and senseless (F)* to any part of his parishioners, *is highly unbecoming his station, character, and education, and instead of healing, can only tend to promote and widen dissensions;* that, by such conduct, he had identified himself with the parish officers, and they have together shewn a marked disrespect for the parishioners at large, and a contemptuous disregard for their opinions and interests.

Resolved, That if the parish-officers can build walls and cells, without the consent of the Vestry, they may expend the parish money to any extent; and instead of two, they may, if they please, build *twenty cells.*

Resolved, That by denying to the parishioners the means of discussing matters relative to their own interests, and in the accustomed mode, agreeably to their undoubted right and privilege, *the parish-officers, with the Vicar at their head, are upholding the monstrous doctrine, that they may put their hands into the pockets of the parishioners, at any time, to any extent, and for any purpose, however wild or extravagant.*

"However, when the contract was entered into, and the work proceeded in so far as to complete the wall, allowing only a space of 50 feet from the house, at length a Vestry was called, and

every effort was made to procure the attendance of their friends, as well by the Vicar and Parish-officers as by the opposers of the measure. On the proposition of the Churchwardens, Mr. Melish took the chair.

“Mr. Menet, one of the Churchwardens, entered into a long explanation of the conduct and motive of the officers; after which, Mr. Ogle moved the following resolution:—

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this Vestry, that the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Parish of Edmonton have, in the general discharge of their duty, in their attention to the pecuniary concerns intrusted to them, and in their solicitude for the well-being and comfort of the poor, been actuated by the purest and most honourable motives: That the said Churchwardens and Overseers have, on all occasions, and especially in the recent improvements at the Workhouse, displayed a most laudable zeal, which this Vestry is desirous of acknowledging and approving in the strongest terms.

“Mr. Waithman, after taking a review of the whole proceedings, and making many pointed animadversions on the conduct of the officers, moved as an amendment,

That Parish Officers have no authority to make new buildings or erections at the parish expense, without the consent of the parishioners, at a General Vestry, legally called for that purpose: That the present Churchwardens and Overseers, having entered into contracts for building walls and cells near the workhouse, and having refused to call a Vestry to consider the propriety thereof, they are hereby directed not to pay for the same out of the Parochial Funds.

“Upon a shew of hands the amendment was de-

clared to be carried: a division was then demanded, and there appeared—

|                   |   |   |       |
|-------------------|---|---|-------|
| For the amendment | - | - | 97    |
| Against it        | - | - | 50    |
|                   |   |   | <hr/> |
| Majority          |   |   | 47    |
|                   |   |   | <hr/> |

“ Upon which a poll of the whole parish was demanded, but strenuously objected to by the majority. Mr. Mellish, however, granted a poll, to continue three days, from eight in the morning until four in the afternoon. It was then moved, “ That the same be by ballot:” Mr. Mellish refused to put the question. During the poll, many objections were made, and overruled by the Chairman: at the close of which the numbers appeared—

|                              |   |     |
|------------------------------|---|-----|
| For Mr. Waithman's amendment | - | 152 |
| Against it                   | - | 85  |

Majority 67

“ It should be observed, that had the decision been by ballot, the majority would have been much greater; many tradesmen being afraid to vote, and many who did have lost some of their customers.



“ After Mr. Mellish had declared the numbers ;

“ Mr. Waithman, after some observations, introduced the following motion, which was put by the Chairman, and carried by a great majority :—

Resolved, That the fair and established mode of determining all questions proposed in Vestry is either by shew of hands, a division, or a ballot of all the parishioners *then present* : That on Monday, the 3d of October, 1808, the sense of the Vestry had been fairly obtained, first by a shew of hands, and afterwards by a division, whereon the numbers appeared 97 in favour of and 50 against an amendment moved by Mr. Waithman : that William Mellish, Esq. who then presided in the chair, having, upon a request made to him by several parishioners, contrary to his duty as Chairman, granted a poll of the parishioners at large, to continue for three days; and having, upon a motion regularly made, “ that the same be by ballot,” peremptorily refused to put the question; and having also allowed the Curate to vote (who had never paid to any of the rates), contrary to an authority then referred to by him; and having refused the votes of other parishioners, who appeared by the same as well as other authorities then referred to, fully entitled to vote: his conduct has thereby been highly partial and improper, and he has thereby proved himself undeserving the confidence then reposed in him.

I am, Sir, your constant Reader,

Edmonton, Oct. 7, 1808.

A. B.”

I have no hesitation, Sir, in saying that this letter was written by Mr. Waithman's own hand, or under his immediate controul and direction; the author's design will be sufficiently obvious when his mistatements are corrected. There is something so mean and unmanly in lurking behind a disguise, in order to wound a character with more security and effect, that no remarks of mine are necessary to expose the man who does it, to

public execration. In the estimation of the wise and good, the anonymous defamer is deservedly classed with the vile assassin who stabs in the dark, and the incendiary who steals out in the shades of night, to effect his diabolical purpose. Perhaps the defamer is the worst of the three; a wound may be healed, a house may be rebuilt, but it is more difficult to re-establish an injured character.

The letter says (A), The Parish Officers proposed to build a wall, and that the proposition was negatived: it concealed that that negative was rescinded. I quote from the minutes of those two Vestries:

*April 4, 1808.*—At this adjourned Monthly Vestry of Sunday, April 3d, agreeably to notice given in Church and Chapel, the necessity of erecting a brick wall at the back of the Workhouse was taken into consideration.

Present, the two Churchwardens, three Overseers, and 25 inhabitants; in all 30.

Resolved, That no Fence be built at the back of the Workhouse.

*April 19, 1808, Easter Tuesday.*—A Vestry was held pursuant to notice, &c. for the annual purpose of electing Officers, &c. &c.

Present, the Vicar, the two Churchwardens, three Overseers, and 48 inhabitants; in all 54.

The Minutes of the last Vestry were read.

Resolved, That the Minute respecting there being no Fence erected at the back of the Workhouse be rescinded, and that the other Minutes be confirmed.

Resolved, That the Thanks of Vestry be voted to the Churchwardens, for their particular attention to the interests of the Parish.

The letter states (B), That the Parish Officers determined of *themselves* to build the wall, and also two cells. I insert another extract from our Parish records :

July 7, 1806.—At this adjourned Monthly Vestry of Sunday, the 6th of July, a Report respecting the repairs and improvements of the Workhouse was taken into consideration, agreeably to notice given in Church and Chapel.

*The Report.*—That your Committee having taken into consideration the present unsafe and dilapidated state of the Workhouse, do feel it their duty to make an especial Report thereof to the Vestry. It appears also to your Committee, that considerable repairs, as stated in the particulars now submitted to the Vestry, are absolutely necessary, and cannot be postponed without material risk of the health and personal safety of the poor. It also appears to your Committee that it is highly requisite to enclose the House by a proper Fencing, to keep the poor within bounds, and to prevent that access to public houses and idle wandering, which the Master of the House has not now the means of preventing. It also appears to your Committee that it would materially conduce to the comfort and health of the poor, if a new ward was erected for the accommodation of the sick, to keep them separate from others who are not diseased.

This Vestry having taken into consideration the Report of their Committee on the present state of the Workhouse, do resolve, that a brick wall nine feet high, of proper solidity, and at a convenient distance from the House, at the discretion of the Churchwardens and Overseers, be immediately erected.

Resolved, That the House be repaired according to the particulars produced by Mr. Gosling, subject to such alterations as may appear expedient to the Churchwardens and Overseers.

Mr. Gosling's plan distinctly specified the two separate apartments intended for the diseased, the insane, or the refractory, designating them by the very name of "Cells." The name might be un-



fortunate, but the nature and intended use of them are the only points to be considered. Two subsequent Vestries, according to my opinion, confirmed the above orders, but certainly recognized them, and other Vestries carried into effect part of the proposed improvements, because the whole at once would incur a large expense. But the Officers did nothing in it *of themselves*; and Mr. Waithman knew this before he wrote, for they had printed and circulated full copies of the Votes of Vestry, for the information of the Inhabitants.

The writer of this letter, Sir, then says (C), That a Requisition was presented to me for a Vestry, which I refused.

I must state, in the first place, that I am not the official organ through which Vestries are convened. I have no discretionary power of granting or refusing them. They are summoned according to the custom of the parish, which it would be indecorous for me to infringe, by a notice signed by the two Churchwardens before it is published. Had I interfered, by ordering a Vestry, the Churchwardens might, and with propriety too, have forbid it, and I should have placed myself in a very distressing situation. I therefore returned the following answer to the Requisition. I insert this the more willingly, because at the last Vestry Mr. Waithman held this very Letter in his hand, and was

commenting on part of its contents; I called upon him to read the whole, I was universally seconded, and the Chairman decided that it ought to be read. He felt himself for some minutes in a very awkward embarrassment; he knew as well as I did, that that letter would condemn his own conduct, and justify mine; and after much confusion said, it did not suit his purpose, and put it into his pocket. The requisition was presented to me by Mr. George White, to whom early the next day I sent the following answer:

*To Mr. George White.*

SIR,

*Edmonton, August 27, 1808.*

In consequence of the requisition you left with me yesterday evening, expressing the wish of several respectable inhabitants, that a Vestry might be held to consider the propriety of building a wall round the workhouse, I have early this morning waited on the Churchwardens, and consulted with them on the subject.

It appears that the gentlemen who now fill the several parochial offices of Churchwardens and Overseers are perfectly unanimous as to the necessity of an effectual fence round the house, and also as to the mode in which that fence should be constructed, and they consider that their duty imperiously calls upon them to carry into effect that improvement, the want of which has been so long and so loudly complained of, and the execution of which rests immediately upon themselves. It appears also that they have circulated a short address to the inhabitants to explain the business to such Gentlemen as, from not attending vestries or visiting the house, may have been led to form erroneous ideas on the subject. After giving you this explanation, it only remains for me to add, that the Churchwardens and myself are of opinion that it would be unnecessary to convene a Vestry immediately, as yourself, and the Gentlemen who have signed the requisition, would probably, on reconsideration, be induced to retract your

wish to that effect; but should the address sent round the parish be deemed not satisfactory, and should it appear that the inhabitants are desirous of a Vestry, I assure you it will be a pleasure, as it will be our duty, to comply with that wish.

I beg the favour of you to express to those Gentlemen, and to accept yourself the assurances of my respectful consideration,

I am, Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

DAWSON WARREN.

On the subsequent visits of Mr. White, I said I had no right to hold Vestries more than any other inhabitant, and referred him to the Churchwardens. At the same time, when Mr. White introduced a notice which he desired might be read in the Church, I refused my permission on the score of irregularity.

Let me now beg the favour of you to turn back to Mr. Waithman's letter, and read the sentence comprised between (D) and (E). I have never written, printed, or expressed, in any manner, directly or indirectly, the ideas which it attributes to me. They are sentiments which I never entertained or advanced. Nor have the words printed in *Italic* ever appeared in any publication of mine, nor I believe any where else than in the jaundiced imagination of the writer of that letter. I therefore leave it to my readers to characterise it by what epithets they please.

Since the question as a parochial affair is set at rest, I may without impropriety repeat what the Churchwardens have spontaneously and handsomely acknowledged, that I did advise them to hold a Vestry. They refused it only on account



of the intemperate and disrespectful manner in which they were treated.

The expressions *silly and senseless* (F), twisted in that curious manner that they may be construed into an insult on my parishioners, are contained in a paper I printed and circulated, with a hope that it would check the mistaken notions which Mr. Waithman was so anxiously disseminating, and which, to my then alarmed mind, seemed to threaten the most injurious consequences.

*To the Tradesmen, Mechanics, and Labourers, Inhabitants of the Parish of Edmonton.*

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

Reports have been spread round the Parish, by which many of you may be led to suppose that measures injurious to your interests, and destructive of your comforts, are about to be adopted by the Officers of this Parish: and a long printed anonymous paper charges me with being the supporter of those measures. Really my power and influence are very trifling, but such as they are, they certainly would be exerted to the utmost in favour of men who have done so much in the service of the parish, who have reformed so many gross abuses, who have lowered the rates, who have effected so many important improvements, and who are labouring with a zeal, which even their opponents would admire, if they took the trouble to examine into it, to promote the comfort of the deserving poor, and to distribute the parochial rates with œconomy and propriety.

A requisition was given me, signed by twenty-eight most respectable inhabitants, desiring me to summon a Vestry on the 2d of September; I returned an answer which I presume was communicated to them, and I may presume was satisfactory to the majority of them; for only four of those inhabitants met on Saturday evening, passed the Resolutions, since printed anonymously, on the *high impropriety* of my conduct, and sent me a copy, signed, Francis Thompson, Chairman. Mr. Francis Thompson also wrote me a letter, which I declined answering, and now decline commenting on.

My object in addressing you is to explain to you what is doing

at the Poor-house, and to obviate the effects of the silly, senseless cry about cells, dungeons, walls, prisons, and bastilles. The Parish Officers, animated by a desire to make the house more comfortable and more regular than it has ever been yet, are building a wall on the South and West sides. It will inclose a spacious airy yard, always accessible to its inhabitants, but beyond which its inhabitants are not to go without leave; does it follow that such leave will not be granted on proper occasions, and will not such leave be a kind of distinction, a reward of good conduct?

The advantage of this wall will be, that those who are of disorderly habits will be restrained from selling the provisions and property of the house, and bringing in spirituous liquors, from going out at irregular times and returning intoxicated, from committing irregularities, which are not only injurious to the neighbourhood and disgraceful to the Parish, but have actually exposed the Parish Officers to the censures of the Lord Mayor of London and of the Magistrates of the County. Let me suppose myself addressing plain honest men who support their families by constant industry; it may please the Almighty to deprive you of health, or to baffle your industry, and you may be compelled to seek an Asylum in the Work-house; many, much more opulent than you or I are, have been so reduced. Would you rather inhabit a house surrounded by a wall in which the vicious and disorderly are kept under restraint, or one in which they cannot be properly restrained? I never before saw a Poor-house that was not fenced in, and I am certain that no Poor-house can be properly regulated which is not inclosed. Let us now consider the cells—I know not why the word cells was ever used—but do not be frightened at a name; these cells will be two warm, dry, wholesome apartments, with chimneys and wooden floors; and for what use? My dear friends, it may please the Great Being who gave us the use of reason to deprive us of that invaluable blessing: if ever reduced to that deplorable state, we must be confined, for our own safety and the safety of others. There is now no place of security for the unfortunate maniac, and you will agree that there ought to be one, when I tell you that the sick and the aged inhabitants of the house have passed many a miserable and sleepless night for want of it; I believe there are few Poor-houses without a separate accommodation of this kind. The other cell (if it must be called so) is intended as a place of security for turbulent, disorderly, and refractory persons, who are now obliged to be conveyed to the cage till the sentence of the Magistrate can be obtained. By this means a reference to the Magistrate may be often avoided, and that reform be sometimes effected which a committal to the House of Correction frequently fails to produce.

My dear friends, the time is hastening when the only permanent distinction among men will be between the good and the bad, when God will judge equally the inhabitant of a Work-house and the master of a Palace. That we may so conduct ourselves as to obtain favour in his sight, is the prayer and wish of

*Vicarage, Edmonton,  
September 6, 1808.*

Your affectionate Friend,

DAWSON WARREN.

As I consider that a perusal of this paper will fully justify me from Mr. Waithman's resolutions at the Rose and Crown, I have only to make a few remarks on the vote of censure against you, which was meant to render the whole letter formidable and efficient.

I pass by the artifices which carried this vote; but, Sir, it ought to be known that the poll of the Parish at large was demanded by twenty of the principal inhabitants, who supported the demand by a precedent on the Vestry book, and that it was urged to you, that a ballot was an unusual and improper way of deciding a public question. It ought likewise to be known that the gentleman who is insidiously denominated the Curate, in order that it might appear he was under my influence, was the Minister of Southgate Chapel; a highly valuable and respectable character, to whom I never applied, and of whose sentiments on the subject I knew nothing till they were expressed by the vote he gave. The authorities then produced to you appeared to prove that he was legally entitled to give it. With regard to the votes you disallowed, as none of them are dis-



tinctly specified, I have no observation to make upon them. But, Sir, the greater number of the parishioners, whatever their sentiments may be about the Parish Officers, will long recollect your politeness and urbanity, your impartial attention to us all, and the compliment you paid us, in coming purposely from London to attend the close of the Vestry. I have however done with this disgraceful vote, for the Parish has publicly rescinded it.

I proceed now to state some facts, which apply to the motion of Mr. Waithman in the Common Council, respecting the receiving and maintaining my son on the foundation of Christ's Hospital, and to the assertions contained in the various speeches then delivered, as they were detailed in the Public Papers of Friday November 4.

I do not think it necessary to give any public statement of my income, it will be sufficient for me to explain it, if I should be called upon, before those who have alone a right to question me on the subject, the Worshipful the Governors of Christ's Hospital.

My accuser asserts, that I made 500*l.* last year by the sale of potatoes. I have had my glebe but a little time in my own hands, my whole farm is thirty acres, and I am at present a loser by the cultivation of it.

Mr. Waithman intimates, that you, Sir, sold me the presentation for a few votes in the County of Middlesex. A scandalous insinuation! but

at the same time the great object of all his clamour. Had not the demon of party spirit stimulated him to these exertions, a thousand walls might have been built in Edmonton, and a thousand children such as mine might have been received at Christ's Hospital without his interference. Let him turn his eye upon the poll-book at Brentford, and see how you, Sir, bought my vote. The county knows how honourably you fulfilled your public promise on the hustings, that you would stand independent and impartial; it is not necessary to adduce the way my second vote was given as an instance of it. I remember when I waited upon you to solicit the favour, you afterwards so kindly conferred, that I felt the full value of what I was asking. I expressed my apprehension, that you might be surrounded with numerous claimants, more entitled to your notice. You said, no application so well grounded had been made to you on the subject, nor did you think a fairer claim could be urged, than that of the Minister of your Parish, with whose character and deportment you were so well acquainted, and so highly satisfied.

Mr. Waithman proceeds to reproach you for not giving your presentation to a poor man, (whom he had heard of, and of course, I hope, relieved,) who had eight children, and had a distress put into his house for the poor-rates. I dare say this had a pretty effect in his speech; but, Sir,

if this story be true, it disgraces the officers who could sue for the warrant of distress, the magistrates who could grant it, and the neighbourhood which could witness, and not relieve such a case. Rather than believe that the officers, the magistrates, and the neighbourhood, should all so totally depart, in this one instance, from their universal character, I am inclined to think this case must be added to the list of the ingenious inventions intended to embellish his oration. But if there was such a man, is it my duty, when a favourable opportunity offers of benefitting my family, to go round the country and search for some one who wants it more? If there was such a man, unless he had fallen from a higher sphere in life, his ideas could not be raised above the class of a labourer; has he not, in the present enlightened state of society, the means of giving his sons an education adequate to his situation? He has it in the numerous little schools which surround him; he has it, if his pride does not oppose, in our parochial establishments. Why is it necessary to give his children an education calculated to form the Admiral, the Statesman, the Merchant, or the Divine?

Mr. Waithman will say, that I have in my own hands the means of educating and providing for my children, according to my rank in life; but I maintain, that I have it not any more than the person we have been just supposing. The situation of a Clergyman is peculiar—he is on a level



with every class of the community—he does not degrade himself when he sits down in the cottage, and becomes the confidential friend of its humble inhabitant—he is not elevated above his sphere when he associates with the Prince. Yet when he dies, his children fall from the rank he held, and too generally struggle with poverty, embittered by the recollection of what they had been accustomed to. Were I to educate my children upon this principle, I should, judging by present appearances, certainly leave them beggars, and, perhaps, die with the guilt of unpaid debts wilfully incurred. By an education suited to my rank in life,—I mean such a one as I myself had,—I mean sending the boys to some of our invaluable public schools, or private seminaries, and afterwards to College; and giving my daughters all those acquirements, and that knowledge becoming their sex and apparent situation; and this, I maintain, I have not the means of doing. Will the duties of my station, and the rules of propriety, permit me to quit the Vicarage-house, to evade the various claims attached to my living, and retire into a small lodging, in order to devote my income to the educating and providing for my children? My Diocesan would soon reprimand me for such an arrangement, and Mr. Waithman be the first to raise a clamour against it.

Mr. Waithman says, that but for his notice of the occurrence a year ago, he has no doubt I should have had another child in Christ's Hospital. He must not flatter himself that his notice has ac-

casioned the slightest change in my sentiments and wishes. My second son is not yet old enough; when he is, I shall, unless some good reasons should occur to render it inexpedient, exert my utmost endeavours to obtain for him the same excellent education.

If I am asked, why I am so anxious to obtain for my boys this particular education, it is, in addition to other reasons, because I think it peculiarly adapted for one, who is destined to make his own way in the world; because I have been a pleased eye-witness of the excellent discipline which reigns through its whole system, and the consequent subordination and good manners of the boys; because their morals seem guarded by the peculiar regulations of its plan; and because so many worthy and illustrious characters in the Church, the Navy, and the Commercial world, have received their education within its walls; some of them persons of family and connections, who reflect back a lustre on the foundation which reared them.

Mr. Griffiths supported the mover, and asserted that every part of his statement was true. The public may put the weight of his testimony also into the same scale, and weigh them both against my assertions. From the story he told of his visit to my boy, I am led to suspect, that he was the author of a letter, signed "An Old Governor," which appeared in a weekly paper; in this the same story was related, embellished with a curious addition, "That *Master Warren* of

Edmonton was very well, and that his Mamma had just been to see him in *her* carriage."—I keep neither carriage nor horse for pleasure.

I was sorry to see introduced in the same speech the name of Sir William Curtis, and to find that his opinion was quoted as to the impropriety of my son's admission; and I really believe the worthy Baronet regrets it still more than I do. I have asked him if he gave any authority to this person to state his opinion. He assured me he had not; and that he had been anxious to avoid the having his name mentioned, lest he should be suspected of those personal motives against me which he totally disclaimed, and which I would by no means impute to him. It is true that he has obliged me, for the last six years, to levy, at a great expense, and in spite of the appeals which he has successively made to different courts of law, the trifling sum of about 10*l.* for an annual corn-rent due to me from his estate. But this has not given rise to any personal difference between us, and I cannot suppose that it has influenced his language as quoted by Mr. Griffiths. While he thus disavowed the having given any authority for the use of his name, he allowed that he had advanced such an opinion in private conversation, and that he still maintained it. I thanked him for his candour; and expressed my regret that when I had applied to him for a presentation, he had not even in the slightest degree intimated such a sentiment.

I am told, Sir, that the original Institution



was not designed to take in such children as mine. It was meant solely for the children of decayed citizens, of that truly pitiable class of men who had seen better days. Had the son of a Freeman of London, who had been reduced from affluence and comfort, presented his claim in competition with mine, I have no doubt but you would have given him your presentation. I am certain I should have said, here is the more immediate object of the Institution—I will not stand in his way, but apply in some other quarter. But I am also told that the funds of this noble establishment have been so increased, that it was impossible to consume its revenues on the objects for which, strictly speaking, it was founded. Who then has a right to dispose of this surplus, but the Governors who supplied it? and they have disposed of it in a way best calculated to promote the interests of society. They first improved the system of education and discipline to the highest pitch, and then added to the list of admissible objects the sons of the Clergy of the established church, who, with life-incomes, were not men of property, and also a certain description of Non-Freemen. Is this noble foundation merely a charity-school on a large scale? Is absolute poverty a necessary requisite for admission? Why then do the slightest appearances of ill health or uncleanness, the too frequent concomitants of poverty, effectually exclude a boy? Why are the sons of paupers and of servants excluded, while

no regulation that I have ever heard of presents a limitation to the income of a parent? In other Institutions, where such limitations are intended, the exact boundaries of them are expressed; in Christ's Hospital it is left entirely to the discretion of the Governor who presents, and the Committee which receives the child. The poor man with eight children, supposed by Mr. Waithman, was a case quite irrelevant to the subject: had he been excused his rates, he would have received parochial relief, and his son consequently been ineligible. I maintain, Sir, that if the School was at first intended to assist those who had been rich, but had fallen into misfortunes, the Governors, on being empowered by the increased funds, have acted wisely, and for the good of society, when they extended its benefits to the children of men whose incomes end with their lives. This was my view of the subject when I sought the presentation—it was yours, I believe, when you granted it—and I presume also it has been the view in which the Governors have considered that and many similar presentations; and I am confirmed in that opinion by the assertions in the Common Council, that the case of my son was fully considered. It is for the Governors to decide whether I am right; and as I am convinced that men of such high character and unimpeached respectability are far above being influenced to an improper decision by any undue motives, as has been so illiberally insinuated, and are far superior to the being moved by the noisy

clamours of Mr. Waithman and his associates, I await their determination with perfect confidence and respect.

Upon facts thus candidly stated, and stated with that fulness and unequivocal regard to the whole truth that must dispel the obscure and sinister interpretations which it has been attempted to put upon them, I avail myself of this opportunity to submit to you, and through you to the public, the few following observations:

Our parish concerns must, as you well feel who are daily called to participate in interests of higher and more general extent, occupy but a subordinate place in this discussion. If their importance is acknowledged beyond the limits of our own little community, it can only be in the example of good and bad management they may afford. With this view only is it desirable that they should be discussed here or elsewhere. Too much warmth and too much extraneous matter have been introduced into the subject: I trust that they will never extend their influence to any other part of the county. Yet, as I have the good fortune of addressing you in the double capacity of a distinguished member of this our community, and of a Governor of that noble Institution whose present regulations have been called in question, I am induced to comment on what has passed relative to both these subjects. I give the precedence in so doing to the transactions of the late Vestries, because they



involve considerations of a more immediate interest to my mind, which come more directly home to the daily habits and affections of my social intercourse, which are more immediately connected with the exercise of my professional duties: whilst the question of my son's admission is one of an inferior moment, as it relates to me personally, though indeed it is of very material consequence, as it involves the future interests of the Hospital, the motives and ultimate determination of the Governors, and the prospects of those parents and children whom their determination will affect.

The main object of our late parochial altercations (for I am afraid that after all they deserve no better name) is reducible into a very narrow compass. The contending parties, professing to have the same result in view, are desirous of arriving at it by different ways; the only question is, which is the right way? They both say, they are anxious for the comfort and well-being of the poor, to whose maintenance the parish at large is made to contribute: these they wish, no doubt, to be obtained with the greatest possible effect to the objects of our contribution, the least possible burden to the parochial funds, and with the utmost attainable benefit to society in general. But, Sir, the Parish Officers contend, and I think rightly, that these desirable objects are best obtained by a due attention to order, good morals, and general

decorum of behaviour; and they conceive that in this, as in other similar cases, not only temptations to a contrary conduct should be withdrawn, but that the frailty of human nature should be supported by a certain degree of restraint, in order to keep the objects of our care within the bounds of their duty.

They consider that the obligation existing between the parish and those whom it supports, is two-fold. If, by the humane and beneficent laws of England, the parish is bound to provide for the maintenance of those of its inhabitants who cannot maintain themselves, they also are called upon by still stronger ties to shew, in return, a constant and even scrupulous attention, not only to the persons of their immediate superiors, but to the laws and regulations of the society that finds them food and raiment. Hence has arisen, in the minds of the Parish Officers, the necessity of some additional safeguards for the regularity of our Poor-house. Their opponents maintain that no such necessity exists. They would have left the inhabitants of the Poor-house in their late state of entire independence, or at most would plant a hedge or erect a railing round its premises.

A few moments reflection will suffice to elucidate the merits of these opposite plans. On the one side we have the experience of near two years unexampled care and assiduity, which our present Churchwardens and Overseers have manifested in the concerns of the Poor-house, as well as in

every other branch of our parochial economy. We have the benefit of their anxious attendance on the poor, of their practical observation on the advantages and defects of the system hitherto pursued ; we know that they can have none but good and honourable motives for giving effect to those observations. On the other hand, and in direct and angry opposition to these manifold testimonies, we have the crude, indigested, and indigestible notions of a set of speculators in experimental philosophy, who would have us believe that vice is sufficient to its own correction ; that the hand of authority is not needed to suppress it ; and that those individuals alone for whose very existence we are providing, should be exempted from the same wholesome discipline and restraint which is necessarily and justly imposed upon every other class of society.

If we endeavour to reason them out of these extraordinary positions, they shift their ground, disclaim all utility to be derived from the experience and practice of other parts of the county we live in ; tell us a most wonderful discovery, that liberty is preferable to slavery, and persevere in affirming that the apartments which were intended for humane and charitable purposes are to be considered as the Cells and Dungeons of a prison. —So much for the theory of the respective parties. But you, Sir, who have been so long an inhabitant of the parish, and have, on more than one occasion, shewn a kind solicitude for its wel-



fare, by taking an active share in the management of its interests, must have had occasion to know what almost every one has seen with his own eyes and heard with his own ears: I mean the frequent disorders both by day and night which, owing to the late uncircumscribed situation of the Poor-house, were at once an offence to public decency, and a crying outrage upon the municipal laws of the country.

Here then we have the unerring testimony of our own senses. Here we have repeated and incontrovertible facts, against which the efforts of the most ardent theorist must fail. It is a matter of notoriety that the Poor-house has been the focus from which have issued almost uncontrouled, various acts of fraud, intoxication, theft, and prostitution. It has contained within itself not only the profligate and incurable agents of these several enormities, but also the means of encouraging them to a continuation of their offences. They have purloined articles from the store-room, that they might exchange them for strong liquors; thus their complicated crimes used to operate for their mutual support and accumulation. Our poor have been allowed to beg about the neighbourhood insomuch as almost to render the name of an Edmonton pauper proverbial in the county.

I have said that the above circumstances are of general notoriety. I lament that few who know any thing of our parish can allege ignorance of

them; but if there be still any of my friends or neighbours either ignorant or unbelieving, let them consult the parish records; let them inquire at the Poor-house; they will there learn the names of the delinquents, the circumstances of their guilt, and how often they have, notwithstanding the reproof of magistrates, notwithstanding such means of prevention as have hitherto been available, relapsed into the commission of criminal, too often felonious acts. And is this state of things to be tolerated? are these disorders even to be sanctioned by the irregularity of our parish establishments, because it may suit the views of a few turbulent individuals to tell the poor that they are oppressed, when they are subjected to wholesome restraint, and the guilty that they are hardly dealt with, when their crimes undergo correction? Is this large, populous, and wealthy parish, which on so many accounts ought to afford an example of order and good government, to be a by-word, an opprobrium to surrounding parishes, because the spirit is wanting to resist so lawless a doctrine? As a clergyman, and as a man, I am bound to God and my parishioners to use every faculty that God has given me to prevent it: in this sense it is that I approve of the conduct of the Parish Officers, in building a brick wall eight feet high as a fence to the Poor-house, enclosing within it a yard sufficiently spacious to afford healthy exercise to its inhabitants, and the means of practising with decency and propriety the several

usages of household convenience. Happily there are many, indeed a very large majority, to whose general good conduct it is a pleasure to do justice, and to whom consequently a certain latitude of indulgence in all respects, but particularly in that of temporary absences, can with propriety be granted. It is no small credit to the present regulations that they have already cleared the house of several improper persons.

If the Officers have been deficient in their duty, it was, in my mind, in not persisting in their intention to provide separate apartments for such of the poor as, from mental derangement, or from the contraction of contagious disorders, or from incorrigible habits of offensive profligacy, instances of all which have repeatedly occurred of late, may require, upon the most evident principles of humanity or humane precaution, to be separated from the remainder of the inmates: this advantage has been sacrificed to the unworthy clamour of more unworthy demagogues, who have persisted in denominating such apartments dungeons and prisons. Let these *names* be contrasted with the benevolent purposes to which the *thing* was to be appropriated, and let the real benefactors of the poor then decide upon the merits of the contrast.

Were it not from a desire to stand well with my parishioners, and to explain to them my conduct on this as well as on other parts of my professional life, I might have spared you and myself the trouble of



going thus minutely into this question of our parochial policy : it has now been decided upon, and I trust set at rest for ever by the solemn vote of the most numerous and respectable meeting in Vestry that was ever known in this parish. My own sentiments have been thus sanctioned and confirmed, and I shall be in no small degree gratified in seeing them acted upon for the health, comfort, and good conduct of the poor, the furtherance of their moral and religious duties, and for the general decorum and well-being of the parish, with which I am so nearly connected. Nothing, you may be assured, will be on my part wanting to assist in the execution of this good work, and in giving effect to the benevolent intentions of those who are the authors of it.

I am sure that these gentlemen will see the best reward of a very laborious and in some respects very ungrateful career of public service, in the success of their praiseworthy endeavours for the good of their fellow-parishioners. As their motives have been pure and unquestionable, so their conduct, as Parish Officers, has been irreproachable; they have acted for the benefit of their Constituents, and they have acted with their assent and approbation. Never has it entered into their thoughts as, for obvious purposes, it was asserted, to put the parish to expense, without having a competent authority for so doing. That they had such authority it were waste of time to prove, as the parish records are open to the inspection of any

person properly qualified, who may wish to satisfy himself on that head : an abstract of them has moreover been printed, and circulated for the general information of the Parish.

I now come to the subject which has been so violently, and, as I must think, so wrongfully introduced and agitated in the Common Council of the Metropolis ; that of my having obtained from your friendship a presentation for my eldest son for Christ's Hospital. That it is misplaced and impertinent for any individual to busy himself with the private concerns of another, will not be disputed : but the person who has in this instance taken this trouble upon himself, professes public motives, disclaims any that are personal, and has addressed himself to a respectable public body upon what he calls a flagrant public abuse. He has given publicity and an unmerited degree of importance to actions of my private life, which has hitherto been passed in a total absence from all public affairs not immediately connected with the duties of my profession. What right this person has had to avail himself, for this purpose, of his situation in the body above alluded to, I will not stop to inquire ; it is sufficient that he has forced me, however wrongfully, before a public tribunal ; that he has specifically arraigned a part of my conduct as a breach of my duty as a clergyman and as a man.

I respect sufficiently the opinion, and even the prejudices of the public, not to shrink from the inquiry ; and strong as I feel in the goodness of my cause, I come forward boldly to avow and justify what I have done in this instance, as well as every other action of my past life which he can call in question. If this person has exercised a right in the part he has now taken, it will be for others to say where and to what extent there may exist this right of interference with the government of Christ's Hospital. Any authoritative influence over that body on the part of the Common Council is expressly disclaimed by the mover of this question. He knows that the Common Council, whatever may be its sentiments, has no power to enforce them : but it has influence, and it can request certain of the Governors to act in conformity to its wishes.

It is not for me to say what degree of weight those Gentlemen will allow to such a request, still less can I pretend to know how far the Governors at large may be disposed to sanction such an interference with their rights (for it is not Mr. Waithman only who has rights), or whether they may or may not consider the discussion of the subject, and the manner in which it has been discussed, a proper and decorous representation of their conduct, and calculated to advance the interests of the Hospital.

I must confine myself to repelling the charges that have been brought against me, and I trust, that after I have done so, there will remain of them no more than the shame of having maliciously, and for unworthy purposes, brought them before the public.

In the outset, Sir, we are told that this was a gross, flagrant, unheard-of transaction, such as had never before disgraced the character of man, or the annals of Christ's Hospital. It is stated, that no man before me, having such an income as I have, had ever succeeded in getting a presentation for a child. Who would not believe, from the boldness and mock solemnity, with which this assertion was brought forward, that it must be true; but I deny the truth of it; and in support of this denial, I refer to the lists of children that have, within the memory of man, been upon the foundation, to the lists of those who are now there, and to the characters and situation of their parents. I assert, that I have as fair a claim as very many upon those lists, and that my child, according to the present practice and spirit of the institution, is a fit and proper object of this charity. I am moreover told, that no child was ever rejected or returned home from the school, for the reasons which are now so loudly urged for the expulsion of mine.

But before I go farther upon this point, allow me to say something upon the subject of incomes, and



of my income in particular. This reformer of abuses has declared publicly, that he could prove the amount of my income and the value of my Vicarage; how comes he, Sir, to be so well informed on these matters? I have never been with him on any other terms, than those of distant civility and good neighbourhood, I never talked to him even on the produce of my garden: I have not more than once in my life, and that in the exercise of what I conceived to be a professional duty, had any direct communication with him. It is not likely that such an opportunity may again occur, I hope for his sake it may not. Where then does this man get his information of people's fortunes? Is this an instance of the facility of prying into family concerns, which he has so often and so loudly reprobated, as resulting from the public necessities of the times? Did he go to the tax-gatherer with his pencil in his hand, and endeavour to calculate from that source what was the probable amount of my income? Is this his respect for individual independence and freedom from the odious annoyance of impertinent curiosity? Is for him a man's house no longer to be his castle, nor his own breast the depository of his family affairs? I never told Mr. Waithman the amount of my income, and as you know how very improbable it is, on various accounts, that he should have learned it through those friends, from whom there would be no reason for my with-

holding it, you may judge both of the degree of accuracy to be allowed to his statements, and of the expedients to which he has recourse for the furtherance of his purposes.

I return to the subject, and I again say, that the claim for my child's admission is an unexceptionable one. The Committee is to be assured, that the parents of a child so admitted have not the means of educating and providing for it; is this to be understood as implying that they have not the actual means of subsistence, of preventing the child from starving, or going to the parish for relief? No. This forced construction of the Hospital regulations can never be the just one; it is not that on which the Governors have for many years acted. Neither is it meant to say, that there are altogether wanting the means of paying the expense of schooling in early life. The very words *provide for*, indicate clearly a different meaning; they do not look to the present moment so much as to the far more important, as well as expensive care of finishing a youth's education; of fitting him for the naval service of the country, or of settling him with a competent allowance at one of the Universities, as young men are annually so settled from the funds of the institution.

It is for these purposes, that a man, even if he has my income, yet at the same time has eight children, of whom five are girls, may truly and conscientiously say, that he has not in his own purse the adequate means of expenditure. These

you know, Sir, are not sanguine or presumptuous views for a father to entertain, who has been so fortunate as to obtain a presentation for a son to Christ's Hospital. They are such as the laws and best purposes of that Institution hold forth and sanction; they are among the foremost benefits that the nation derives from it; they afford the hope of a liberal and academic education to those who would not otherwise have one; and let me ask you, Sir, or any other person acquainted with the actual value of money, whether it can be supposed, that, situated as I am, I can give my children those advantages at a time, when, with every possible œconomy, a young man can hardly remain at one of our Universities without an expenditure of 200*l.* per annum?

But, Sir, are we to look to the present moment only? Are there no contingencies, for which a prudent man is bound to provide? Is the tenure on which we hold life, of so very certain duration, that it is unwise or improper in a man attached to his family, to think of the period at which it shall end, and act accordingly? You know that mine is a life-income; that income which enables me to live with comfort will cease at my death, and my numerous children will then be left in a situation, in which even Mr. Waithman would allow them to be proper objects of the so often mentioned charity.

Such are, in succinct statement, the reasons which,

I think justify me in saying, that a child, fated as mine is, and probably will be hereafter, is properly admitted upon this foundation. I might go further, and say, that I believe that such cases have been particularly foreseen by the Governors, and that their regulations are in an especial manner applicable to the children of Clergymen so situated. It is hard, in the exercise of the most obvious parental duty, to be obliged publicly to enter into these particulars. It is one of the wrongs of which I have to complain; but few men are exempt from wrongs or injustice, on the part of active and malignant spirits.

With the Governors of Christ's Hospital there may exist still other motives for the confirmation of my sentiments on this head. They who are more minutely acquainted with the practical regulations under which they act, and which, if I may so say, constitute the common law of their institution, will, perhaps, conceive that in themselves is vested a discretionary power to modify their original statutes, and to apply them in such manner as, without departing from the original spirit on which they were framed, may be more applicable to the habits and manners of the present day. They will think that the same income, and that a life income too, which would have been deemed opulence two hundred years ago, does not now elevate its possessor so high into the class of the opulent, as that he may not with propriety seek



for and accept such assistance as that of which I have availed myself.

These topics it is reserved for the Governors to determine upon; and I have reason to think that, in the case now before us, they have not been without their weight in the decision which is made the ground of so much complaint. I find, in this belief, an additional confirmation of my sentiments, and a strong ground of expectation as to the result of this appeal to the Governors themselves. You now know, Sir, upon the authority of one of the Governors, that, previous to my son's admission, his admissibility had been strictly canvassed by the Committee of Governors, and that there were only three that objected to it. It is not possible for me to know all that passed upon this occasion; but I am at least at liberty to conclude, from the clamour that has since been raised and from other circumstances, that no argument was unemployed, no endeavours untried, by those three Gentlemen to enforce their objections; and that as my son was admitted after, and in spite of so strenuous an opposition, the great and respectable majority that decided in his favour must have been prompted to do so by some such reasons as I have adduced above, or possibly by others still more forcible, which it is not in my power to suggest.

But I cannot avoid taking notice of an insinuation, or rather an assertion, that has been made,

as to what would have been a most unworthy subterfuge, in order to remove any difficulty to my son's admission. It has been said, I hope inadvertently, that it did not appear, at the time of the child's admission, that the Vicar who signed his certificate was also his father; and it would follow as a necessary consequence, if this were true, that I had attempted to introduce my child into the Foundation surreptitiously, and under other than his real circumstances. Now, Sir, this was so far from being the case, that it was perfectly well known to the Governors, that the person who solicited his son's admission was the Vicar of Edmonton. Indeed this could not well be otherwise, as so much discussion took place on the occasion, in which the Member for Middlesex is represented as using his influence in my favour; and a worthy Alderman, together with the three Gentlemen alluded to against me, and as the two principal persons thus brought forward are my near neighbours. But it besides must be in the recollection of every Member of the Committee, that I appeared personally before them, and answered to such questions as they chose to put to me: and it moreover happens, that the identical paper which contained the petition for my son's admission, signed by me, contained also the evidence that I signed the certificate of his eligibility, in my quality of Vicar of Edmonton. I affixed

to my name the words "Minister and Parent:" there could not therefore by possibility be a doubt as to the identity of the person whose claim was under consideration; nor could there be, under these circumstances, an intention, much less an attempt, to create such a doubt. I am thus particular in noticing this point, because my respect for the Governors, and for those of my friends whose opinion might be misguided by such an insinuation, would not allow me to treat it and its author with the silent contempt that is most suitable to them both. I am satisfied that no unfavourable impression will be made upon the Committee, or upon the Governors at large, by these unworthy means: they have scrupulously and separately scrutinised my claim, and have decided, as we know, by a very great majority in my favour; and although they certainly could be actuated by no motives of personal favour to me, who had been till then unknown to them, yet they are nevertheless entitled to the sincere expressions of my gratitude.

In taking, for the present, leave of you, my dear Sir, and of this subject, I shall add but a few words on the insinuations and inuendos which have been so largely dealt in by the persons who brought it forward, and on the indecorous manner in which they have outraged my feelings and the cause of truth.

To the mutilation or misrepresentation of facts,

I have opposed the facts themselves; and I have given such explanations of those facts as they themselves fairly admitted of. To those aspersions of my conduct and character, and they have been both heavy and frequent, which are of so vulgar and contemptible a nature as to be altogether undeserving notice, I give no other answer than I shall readily find in the countenance and attachment of so many estimable friends and neighbours, with whom I have long lived, and still continue to live, in those habits of social intercourse which form one of my principal comforts. And to the utmost efforts of Mr. Waithman's malice, of his personal animosity to me, and of his hatred to the religious and political institutions of the country, I oppose a life open to the observation of the society in which I am placed, passed, as I trust it is, in the humble exercise of my duties to God and man, and the integrity of which I feel to be far above the reach of his most furious assaults.

I am well advised that these people, both by what they have dared to assert publicly, and by their unmanly attempts to poison my family comfort, and to break in upon the tranquillity of my fireside, by anonymous addresses to me, and even to my wife, couched in terms of low scurrility, which only could be expected from such a source, have rendered themselves amenable to the laws. There can be no doubt that they have uttered



libels upon me, as they have insulted the Governors of Christ's Hospital: but, strong as I feel myself in the defence that I already possess, I do not think it necessary now to appeal to the law for further support. With an upright face and unshaken conscience, I can and do consign Mr. Waithman and his coadjutors to the alternate sentiments of disgust and applause which good and bad men will respectively entertain at these fresh instances of their perverseness.

I am,

MY DEAR SIR,

Your much obliged

And very faithful Servant,

DAWSON WARREN.

*Vicarage, Edmonton, November, 1808.*









